

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gAbArxBrEYFJzJZNc3iT2ZM9jUdw>

Christians account for 2.3 percent of the billion-plus population in India, which is majority Hindu but officially secular.

The **US Commission on International Religious Freedom**, a bipartisan official advisory panel, in August placed India on its watch list, citing violence against Christians in Orissa and Muslims in the western state of Gujarat.

The move brought swift condemnation from India, an emerging US ally, which said the nation had an independent judiciary and vigilant media to pursue any aberrations from its secular, multi-religious principles.